

Message Text

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ACTION AF-08

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SS-15 PC-01 AID-05 MCT-01 A-01 OPR-02 SY-05
SCS-03 SCA-01 EB-08 COME-00 OMB-01 TRSE-00 ACDA-07
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FM AMCONSUL LUBUMBASHI

TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 2006

INFO AMEMBASSY BRUSSELS

AMEMBASSY DAR ES SALAAM

AMEMBASSY KINSHASA

AMEMBASSY LAGOS

AMEMBASSY LISBON

AMEMBASSY LONDON

AMEMBASSY LUSAKA

AMEMBASSY MOSCOW

AMEMBASSY PARIS

USMISSION USUN NEW YORK

USIA WASHDC

USMISSION NATO

USCINCEUR VAIHINGEN GER/ECJ4-7

DIA WASHDC

SECDEF WASHDC

C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 1 OF 2 LUBUMBASHI 0117

C O R R E C T E D C O P Y FOR TEXT //PAR 1//

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: MOPS, MILI, CG

SUBJECT: GOVERNMENT ACTIONS AND REACTIONS TO THE INVASION: THE
VIEW FROM SHABA AFTER FOUR WEEKS.

1. SUMMARY. ZAIRIAN MILITARY IN BOTH CONTESTED AND UNCONTESTED

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AREAS HAVE CONTINUED UNSUCCESSFUL OPERATING STYLE WHICH HAS LED
TO GRADUAL RETREAT ON FRONTLINES AND DIMINUTION OF POPULAR
SUPPORT IN OTHER PARTS OF SHABA. CIVILIAN LEADERS HAVE ATTEMPTED
TO CURB MILITARY EXCESSES, WITH RESULT THAT CALM SITUATION PER-
SISTS IN LUBUMBASHI, LIKASI AND OTHER NON-FRONTLINE TOWNS.
CIVILIAN AUTHORITIES HAVE SHIFTED SPEECH-MAKING BURDEN IN RURAL
AREAS TO TRADITIONAL CHIEFS WHO DELIVER UNENTHUSIASTIC ADDRESSES

TO COOL AUDIENCES AND WORRY ABOUT WHAT THIS MEANS FOR THEIR FUTURE. POPULAR REACTION TO GOVERNMENT ACTIVITIES GROWS INCREASINGLY NEGATIVE WHILE REACTION TO MOVEMENT POPULARLY BELIEVED TO REPRESENT KATANGAN GENDARMES SEEKING OVERTHROW OF MOBUTU BECOMES MORE POSITIVE. INVADERS THOUGHT ABLE TO WIN EVEN IF THEY CHOOSE NO FURTHER CONFRONTATIONS ON GROUNDS THAT INTERNAL GOZ DISSENTION NOW GROWING CANNOT BE STOPPED. IF CUBAN-ANGOLAN CONNECTION SUBSEQUENTLY ESTABLISHED, AND INVASION LEADS TO REPLACEMENT OF MOBUTU, THE RESULT IS GREAT LOCAL PROPAGANDA COUP FOR THEM. END SUMMARY.

2. MILITARY AT FRONTLINES HAS SHOWN SAME INEPTITUDE DURING SECOND TWO WEEKS WHEN IT WAS SUPPOSEDLY COUNTERING INVADERS AS DURING FIRST TWO WEEKS WHEN REACTING TO SURPRISE ATTACK. IN ITS FAVOR ONE MUST SAY FAZ HAS HAD DISCRETION NEITHER TO DESTROY OCCUPIED TOWNS THROUGH BOMBING ATTACKS NOR TO FIRE INDISCRIMINATELY ON POPULATION IN OCCUPIED AREAS. POSSIBLY, THIS IS CONSCIOUS POLICY; POSSIBLY IT IS DUE TO INABILITY TO SEIZE INITIATIVE. MILITARY MISLED PEOPLE, AND PERHAPS PRESIDENT, FIRST REGARDING RECAPTURE OF KASAJI AND THEN REGARDING FALL OF MUTSHATSHA. SECOND TWO WEEKS CHARACTERIZED BY FURTHER SUPPLY AND COMMUNICATIONS PROBLEMS BETWEEN HEADQUARTERS AND FRONTLINE; LOSSES OF ARMS, AMMUNITION, AND VEHICLES WHEN RETREATING; CONTINUING MORALE AND LEADERSHIP PROBLEMS IN FRONT; AND ERRONEOUS ATTACKS ON ITS OWN TROOPS. MOST THAT CAN BE SAID IS THAT FAZ HAS SLOWED INVADERS' ADVANCE DURING SECOND TWO WEEKS. IT REMAINS TO BE SEEN WHETHER CHANGE IN COMMAND LEADERSHIP AT KOLWEZI CAN MAKE A DIFFERENCE. WHILE MOST OBSERVERS BELIEVE THAT GENERAL SINGA IS VAST IMPROVEMENT OVER HIS PREDECESSOR, THEY ALSO FEEL THAT IT MAY BE TOO LATE.

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3. MILITARY TROOPS IN YET UNCONTESTED AREAS HAVE USED EMERGENCY SITUATION TO EXPLOIT POPULATION TO GREATER EXTENT THAN NORMAL. MOST STRIKING WAS ONE DAY OF TERROR IMPOSED ON KAMINA BY FAZ ON MARCH 31. DECLARING 24-HOUR CURFEW, NEWLY ARRIVED SOLDIERS SEARCHED ALL HOUSES IN TOWNS FOR SUPPOSED FIFTH COLUMNISTS. TROOPS SUBJECTED EUROPEAN POPULATION TO MINOR HARASSMENT, BUT TERRORIZED ZAIRIANS BY LOOTING SHOPS, STEALING, AND CARRYING AWAY DRAFT AGE MALES. REPORTS OF SIMILAR HARASSMENT, BUT ON MUCH LESSER SCALE, ARE KNOWN TO HAVE OCCURRED IN ZAIRIAN SECTIONS OF KOLWEZI AND LUBUMBASHI. IN LUBUMBASHI TROOPS HAVE SEVERAL TIMES SURROUNDED POST OFFICE AT ABOUT 5 O'CLOCK IN THE AFTERNOON AND CHARGED MONEY FROM ALL UNLUCKY ENOUGH TO BE TRAPPED WHO WISHED TO DEPART. IN MANONO, FAR FROM ANY CONTESTED AREA, SOLDIERS HAVE SEIZED RADIOS THAT HAVE BEEN INTEGRAL PART OF MISSIONARY NET. SOLDIERS AT NUMEROUS ROAD BARRICADES ALONG MAJOR TRANSPORTATION LINES HAVE BECOME LITTLE MORE THAN THIEVES, BUT ONES WITH MOUNTING DEMANDS ON TRAVELERS. ALL SIGNS POINT TO BEGINNING OF BREAKDOWN IN MILITARY DISCIPLINE IN AREAS WHICH NOT YET CONTESTED.

4. THERE ARE AS YET NO INDICATIONS OF IMPROVED MILITARY/CIVILIAN RELATIONS. REGIONAL COMMISSIONER ASSUMANI APPEARS TO BE MAN WHO IS TRYING TO INSTILL LOYALTY THROUGH SPEECHES AND PRIVATE MEETINGS, BUT WHO MAY NO LONGER BELIEVE SO STRONGLY IN CAUSE HIMSELF. HE HAS SUCCEEDED IN KEEPING SITUATION CALM AND REDUCING MILITARY EXCESSES IN LUBUMBASHI, LIKASI AND OTHER NON-CONTESTED TOWNSKC BUT THERE IS LIMIT TO WHAT A FEW WELL-INTENTIONED PEOPLE CAN DO.

5. MAJOR NEW POLITICAL WEAPON HAS BEEN USE OF TRADITIONAL CHIEFS TO VISIT RURAL COMMUNITIES TO DECLARE THEIR OPPOSITION AGAINST INVADERS AND URGE LOYALTY TO MOBUTU GOVERNMENT. THE FIVE CHIEFS, INCLUDING MWANT YAV(YEAD OF LUNDA AND MOISE TSHOMBE'S YOUNGER BROTHER) HAVE BEEN HERDED TOGETHER AND TAKEN TO TWO OR THREE VILLAGES PER DAY ON ORDERS FROM THE REGIONAL COMMISSIONER. INTERESTINGLY, THE MOST PROMINENT OF LOCAL CHIEFS, THE HEAD OF BAYEKE TRIBE, GODEFROID MUNUNGU, WHO WAS MINISTER OF CONFIDENTIAL

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INTERIOR UNDER TSHOMBE, HAS SUCCEEDED IN BEING ABSENT FROM SHABA ON BUSINESS DURING CRISIS. ALL REPORTS INDICATE THAT SPEECHES ARE GIVEN UNENTHUSIASTICALLY AND RECEIVED COOLY. ALL CHIEFS ARE REPORTED GERY NERVOUS ABOUT THEIR STATUS AS A RESULT OF SUCH COMMAND PERFORMANCES. IN PAST YEARS OF MOBUTU GOVERNMENT HAS CONSISTENTLY DOWNPLAYED THEIR IMPORTANCE.

6. LOCAL REPORTING ON INVASION HAS SHIFTED FROM NO INFORMATION DURING FIRST DAYS TO REPRINTS OF FAZ CLAIMS OF BATTLE SUCCESSES DURING FOLLOWING TEN DAYS AND MORE RECENTLY TO DAILY HARRANGUES OFFERING COMPREHENSIVE COVERAGE OF SUPPORT FOR MOBUTU FROM VARIOUS MPR GROUPS IN ZAIRE AND SUCH FOREIGN FREIFDS AS RWANDA AND THE CENTRAL AFRICAN EMPIRE. END RESULT IS THAT PEOPLE SELDOM LOOK TO THE LOCAL ZAIRIAN PRESS FOR INFORMATION ABOUT INVASION ACTIVITIES.

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ACTION AF-08

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FM AMCONSUL LUBUMBASHI
TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 2007
INFO AMEMBASSY BRUSSELS OCOGXI
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AXEMBASSY KINSHASA 3056
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7. POPULAR REACTION TO RECENT GOVERNMENT EFFORTS HAS BEEN
GENERALLY NEGATIVE. MILITARY TO RETAIN CREDIBILITY AND POSITION OF
AUTHORITY IN THE SOCIETY NEEDED TO SHOW QUICK DECISIVE ACTION.
INSTEAD, MOST EVIDENT CHARACTERISTICS OF MILITARY ACTIONS HAVE
BEEN GREED, DISORGANIZATION AND COWARDICE. MILITARY IS LOSING
RESPECT RAPIDLY. PEOPLE ARE TIRED OF HARASSMENT AND EXPECTED
PATRIOTISM, NERVOUS ABOUT WHAT MILITARY MIGHT DO IF DISCIPLINE
CONTINUES TO SLIDE, AND AT SAME TIME AMUSED BY MILITARY'S
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CONTINUING INEPTITUDE. POPULAR CURRENT JOKES REFER TO NEWLY ARRIVED
SHIPMENTS OF BOOTS WHICH CAN BE USED ONLY FOR RUNNING
BACKWARDS AND UNIFORMS WHICH ARE CAMOUFLAGED ONLY ON THE BACK
SIDE.

8. PEOPLE STILL HAVE LITTLE DETAILED INFORMATION ABOUT WHO ARE
INVADERS, BUT INCREASINGLY DISCOUNT LIKELIHOOD OF ANGOLAN OR
CUBAN PRESENCE IN ZAIRE (THOUGH NOT SO SURE ABOUT THEIR INTERNAL
SUPPORT). INVADERS WIDELY THOUGHT TO BE EX-KATANGANS SUPPLEMENTED
BY DISSIDENTS FROM OTHER PARTS OF THE COUNTRY. REPORTS PERSIST
THAT INVADERS ARE TREATING POPULATION WELL IN OCCUPIED AREAS.
ALSO WIDELY NOTED IS THAT IN CONTRAST WITH ACTIVITIES OF KATANGAN
GENDARMES IN MID-60'S, CURRENT INVADERS ARE MORE ORGANIZED AND
DISCIPLINED. MANY CONTACTS REPORTEDLY ALREADY MADE DIRECTLY
THROUGH PERSONAL VISITS BY INFILTRATORS WITH THEIR RELATIVES

AND INDIRECTLY BY TELEPHONE CALLS FROM MUTSHATSHA, ESPECIALLY IN KOLWEZI AREA, BUT ALSO IN OTHER COPPERBELT TOWNS. ALMOST NO INDICATIONS TO DATE THAT INVADERS AND THEIR MESSAGES NOT WELL-RECEIVED BY LOCAL POPULATION.

9. WHAT WILL HAPPEN NEXT? INVADERS COULD EITHER CONTINUE ADVANCE OR REMAIN IN PLACE WITH POSSIBLE SAME RESULT. IF SUPPLY LINES STRONG ENOUGH FOR ASSAULT ON KOLWEZI OR OTHER TOWN* FEW THINK ZAIRIAN ARMY COMMANDS LOYALTY OF TROOPS OR PERSEVERANCE TO RESIST. IF INVADERS CHOOSE BASIC STRATEGY TO SIT TIGHT, PERHAPS INCHING FORWARD WITHOUT SPECTACULAR SUCCESS, ZAIRIAN GOVERNMENT COULD COLLAPSE BECAUSE OF INTERNAL DISPUTES IN SHORT MATTER OF TIME. PRESENT SIGNS OF DISSENSION WITHIN MILITARY AND CIVILIAN LEADERSHIP AND BETWEEN TWO GROUPS COULD BRING GOVERNMENT EFFECTIVENESS, ALREADY LOW, TO A HALT, LEAVING INVADERS IN POSITION TO PICK UP PIECES, AT LEAST IN SHABA AREA.

10. GENERAL FEELING IS THAT OBJECTIVE OF INVASION IS OVERTHROW OF MOBUTU RATHER THAN ESTABLISHMENT OF INDEPENDENT KATANGAN STATE. IF INVADERS SUCCEED, AND ANGOLAN/CUBAN CONNECTION ESTABLISHED EVEN INDIRECTLY AS IMPORTANT FACTOR, THIS WILL BE GREAT PROPAGANDA
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COUP FOR CUBAN PRESTIGE AS LEADER OF WORLD LIBERATION MOVEMENT.
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Message Attributes

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